



Champion Report

Theme Area: Economic Engines

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REPORTING PERIOD: Sept 13-December 13, 2016

Goals/Strategies or Action Steps:	What NEW success have you had in moving your theme goals forward over the reporting period?
2B and 2E	Winter CSA structure in place with distribution to approximately 140 low income and/or food insecure individuals in collaboration with Lakewood Health Systems, St. Gabriel's Hospital and CentreCare/Long Prairie.
2C	Much work in navigating licensing and regulation for value added in the kitchens at Sprout in order for growers/food entrepreneurs to utilize the kitchens, demonstrate and sell at the Marketplace.
2C and 2E	Sprout has been awarded at \$171,082 USDA Value Added Producer Grant which will support working capital, marketing, expanding operational capacity, provide support for online transactional systems and continued evaluation of the impact of Sprout in our rural region. The term of the grant is October 2016 – October 2018.
3A and 3B	Region 5 has secured a \$440,000 ArtPlace Grant to support an economic development opportunity utilizing culinary, functional and nonfunctional art installations and experiences intended to expand the work of developing the Sprout Growers and Makers Marketplace into a cultural destination as well as representing the unique cultural diversity of Central Minnesota.
	Investment Crowdfunding: Access to all information available on website: www.northcentraleda.org Department of Commerce began accepting applications for Portal operators on June 20 2016. Two portals have been approved and will begin accepting applications.
	Application submitted to Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for MN Emerging Entrepreneur Program (MEEP) funds to recapitalize Micro-loan program for NCEDA/Region Five. Will learn status at end of year.
What future activities has your theme prioritized for the coming year?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the awards of the VAPG and Artplace, Sprout will be focusing on developing demand and value chains within local foods, expanding capacity with value added production, and strengthening the delicate balance between supply (capacity of growers) and demand. In addition, Sprout and Region 5 will be dedicated to meeting the parameters of the Artplace grant with a robust schedule of events dedicated to cultural and culinary arts at the Marketplace. This work will require dedication of staff time and all community partners. • Implement funding support for Arts Based Community Development collaborations. Create Creative Placemaking network within the region, connecting artists and communities, and providing training and grant support to support collaborative endeavors that will grow local economies. • Enhance arts organization's capacity to connect with and serve communities. • Provide training for artists to increase their income from their art and art –related activity, such as teaching. <p>Further development and education of the Investment Crowdfunding initiative.</p>	

Continued work on the ArtPlace America grant, planning and development of potential projects.
Training growers in business operations and development to continue to scale up volume of locally grown commodities to schools, hospitals, institutions, consumers and those at risk nutritionally through CSAs and Choose Health programs

- Continuing to advance goals in placemaking by working collaboratively with artists to develop a unique sense of place and destination in the Marketplace

How are you working with any of the other RR Theme areas?

Healthcare theme areas are dedicated to the economic and prosperity development of all populations through the prescriptive CSA programs. As the vigorous schedule of the Artplace award develops, numerous theme areas will be called upon to advance the opportunities at the Marketplace.

List any Goals or Recommendations within the plan that your team of theme Champions are struggling to address?

None at this time.